

**Name/Title/Organization:**

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**Article of Public Health Code for comment:** Article 15: Occupations

**Part of article:** 161

**Section number:** 333.16184

**Describe the proposed recommendation and why the recommendation is necessary:**

Expand the range of retired professions that are eligible to apply for and receive a special volunteer license in order to serve indigent or needy individuals in Michigan or to serve in medically underserved areas. This range of professions should include, but is not limited to: dental assistants, dental hygienists, registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, pharmacists, massage therapists, physician's assistants, counselors, psychologists, or veterinarians. Currently, this section only allows a special volunteer license for those retired from 5 professions: medicine, osteopathic medicine and surgery, podiatric medicine and surgery, optometry, and dentistry. It does not account for those retired from other occupations who wish to donate their time and expertise.

**Identify any weaknesses or drawbacks of the existing language:**

The existing language excludes a large range of other health professionals who are retired and wish to donate their time. Currently, it only accounts for 5 health professions.

**Identify any strengths or positive aspects of the existing language:**

The existing language is effective in establishing the regulation required to volunteer. It adequately lays out the requirements, including a continuing education requirement if the applicant has been out of practice for 3 or more years.

**Describe the potential for any unintended negative consequences:**

With the increase in professions covered under this section, there may be a rise in application numbers and thus, the workload for the department. Since there is not a fee associated with this special volunteer license, it may cause financial hardships for the department.

**Identify individuals or organizations who would be impacted by the proposed recommendation:**

All retirees from health professions not currently covered under this proposed sections who are interested in volunteering, indigent and needy individuals who live in medically underserved areas.

**Identify any documentation that support the proposed recommendation (e.g. published articles, reference materials, descriptions of best practices, statutory language from other states, etc.):**

This is a bill analysis from House Bill 4156, which attempted to add retired nurses in the health professions eligible to apply for a volunteer license:

<http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2013-2014/billanalysis/House/htm/2013-HLA-4156-FCA4D796.HTM>

**Provide any additional information, including other impacted sections or parts of the Public Health Code:**

There is little risk to the public, as shown in the Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Agency's disciplinary data. Additionally, areas that are medically underserved or indigent or needy individuals would be served by a greater range of retired professionals looking to donate their time.

Section 333.161185 of the same article in the Public Health Code outlines that individuals with a special volunteer license in the practices of medicine, osteopathic medicine and surgery, podiatric medicine and surgery, optometry, or dentistry are not liable in civil action for personal injury or death proximately caused by professional negligence or malpractice. This immunity from civil suits in medical malpractice should also be applied to the other health professions if they are added to this section.